

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

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R 290500Z JUN 78

FM AMEMBASSY SUVA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7568

INFO ICA RECEPTION CENTER HONOLULU HI

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

USICA WASHDC

AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 SUVA 1116

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAID, OEXC, SEDU

SUBJECT: MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

1. PARTICIPANTS: DR. JAMES MARAJ, VICE CHANCELLOR, UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC, AMBASSADOR JOHN P. CONDON, PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER R. DON CRIDER.

2. PLACE: VICE CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE AT USP. TIME: 10 AM, FRIDAY 2 JUNE.

3. THE COURTESY CALLS BY THE AMBASSADOR AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER ON JAMES MARAJ, THE VICE CHANCELLOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC WERE DELAYED BY MARAJ FOR A NUMBER OF REASONS INCLUDING HIS ABSENCE IN AUSTRALIA. THE JOINT CALL TURNED INTO A SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSION WHICH BOTH SIDES AGREED WAS USEFUL.

4. DR. MARAJ COULD NOT RESIST THE OPPORTUNITY TO TELL HIS SIDE OF THE STORY OF ALLEGED MISTREATMENT AT THE HANDS OF THE AMERICAN BUREAUCRACY, AND MISINFORMATION BY CERTAIN U.S. OFFICIALS
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INCLUDING PREVIOUS AMBASSADORS AND UNNAMED AID OFFICIALS IN WASHINGTON.

5. HE EXPLAINED THAT AS A RESULT OF THE EARLIER TURN DOWN OF THE SATELLITE FINANCING PROGRAM BY AID, HE WAS CONSTRAINED TO POSTPONE THE AGRICULTUREAL SUVEY TEAM AND DELAY PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEER REQUESTS, PREVIOUSLY SUBMITTED, IN THE EXTENSION

SERVICES PROGRAMS OF THE UNIVERSITY, SINCE BOTH THESE PROGRAMS WERE PREDICATED ON THE AVAILABILITY OF SATELLITE SERVICES. THIS, HOWEVER, WAS MISCONSTRUED BY CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS TO IMPLY THAT DR. MARAJ WAS ACTING IN A FIT OF PIQUE OVER BEING TURNED DOWN FOR HIS SATELLITE FINANCING PROGRAM. AS A RESULT, OTHER COUNTRIES OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC FELT THAT THEY WERE BEING DENIED-- BY THE VICE CHANCELLOR'S IMMATURE BEHAVIOR--VALUABLE AGRICULTURAL PROJECTS WHICH THEY STRONGLY DESIRED.

6. FOLLOWING THIS LENGTHY SESSION, THE AMBASSADOR AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER WERE FINALLY ABLE TO ENGAGE THE VICE CHANCELLOR IN A SUBSTANTIVE, MEANINGFUL DISCUSSION ON THE STATUS OF THE VARIOUS PROJECTS PENDING BETWEEN THE USG AND THE UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC.

7. THE ATS-6 SATELLITE PROJECT. DR MARAJ INDICATED THAT THIS PROJECT HAD HIS LONG STANDING SUPPORT; HE CONSIDERED IT ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT PROJECTS FACING IS UNIVERSITY. HE AGREED WITH HIS VISITORS THAT ALL OF THE MISGIVINGS AND BUREAUCRATIC DIFFICULTIES SHOULD BE PUT BEHIND US AND THAT THIS PROJECT COULD PROCEED FORTHWITH.

8. AGRICULTURE PROGRAM. WHILE THE VICE CHANCELLOR HAD NOT WELCOMED YET ANOTHER AGRICULTURAL SURVEY, HE WANTED US TO KNOW THAT HE HAD RECENTLY RECEIVED A LETTER FROM DR.FRED TOM, LEADER OF THE UNCLASSIFIED

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UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AGRICULTURE TEAM, ND THAT HE FELT THAT THIS PROGRAM WAS NOW READY TO MOVE FORWARD. HE WAS PLEASED TO REPORT TO US THAT THE PROJECT HAD BEEN PRESENTED TO THE UNIVERSITY SENATE AND HAD MET WITH ITS APPROVAL.

9. FULBRIGHT PROGRAM. DR. MARAJ WAS FORTHCOMING WITH PRAISE FOR THE HIGH QUALITY OF PERFORMANCE OF THE FULBRIGHT PROFESSORS AT THE USP. HE SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED DR. KENT BURNAHM, WHO IS WORKING TO ADVANCE CERTAIN ASPECTS OF THE EXTENSION STUDIES PROGRAM LINKED TO THE SATELLITE VENTURES, AND DR. RODNEY MOAG, WHOM DR. MARAJ SINGLED OUT AS BEING OF AN EXEMPLARY NATURE.

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10. PEACE CORPS. DR. MARAJ WAS EQUALLY FULL OF PRAISE FOR THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS TO THE USP NOTWITHSTANDING THE OCCASIONAL PROBLEMS AND MISASSIGNMENTS. HE MENTIONED THAT HE HAD RECENTLY DISCUSSED CERTAIN PROBLEMS WITH THE PEACE CORPS DIRECTOR, JOHN DALESSIO. AMBASSADOR CONDON TOLD DR. MARAJ THAT HE WAS AWARE OF THESE PROBLEMS AND THIS LED TO A GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE PEACE CORPS METHODS OF RECRUITMENT AND ASSIGNMENT AND THE NEED FOR THE HOST AGENCY TO BE VERY SPECIFIC ON THE QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED OF THE VOLUNTEERS. ALSO A HOST AGENCY LIKE THE USP SHOULD BE AWARE OF THE PEACE CORPS' BROAD OBJECTIVES AND GUIDELINES.

11. THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE USP. THE VICE CHANCELLOR TOOK THE OCCASION TO POINT OUT THAT THE UNIVERSITY WAS PRESENTLY GOING THROUGH ITS TENTH ANNIVERSARY YEAR AND THAT HE HOPED AN APPROPRIATE CELEBRATION COULD BE WORKED UP TO CONCLUDE THIS SIGNIFICANT MILESTONE IN THE UNIVERSITY'S HISTORY. BOTH DURING THE MID-SEMESTER BREAK, (THE FIRST WEEK IN SEPTEMBER), AND TOWARD THE END OF NOVEMBER,(JUST PRIOR TO GRADUATION CEREMONIES), HE WAS DESIROUS OF BRINGING OFF A NUMBER OF SPECTACULAR PROGRAMS WHICH WOULD HIGHLIGHT THE UNIVERSITY'S UNCLASSIFIED

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CONTRIBUTION TO THE AREA. HE SEEMED GENUINELY INTERESTED IN THE POSSIBILITY OF THE UNITED STATES PARTICIPATING IN THESE PROGRAMS AND HE MENTIONED VICE PRESIDENT MONDALES' ADDRESS ON U.S. POLICY IN THE PACIFIC AT THE EAST-WEST CENTER AS BEING SOMETHING LIKE WHAT HE HAD IN MIND. HE ALSO WANTED TO EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITY OF A PROGRAM ON EXACTLY WHAT THE NEW INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ORDER IS. HE SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED THE POSSIBILITY OF ANDREW YOUNG ADDRESSING THE UNIVERSITY. HE ALSO MENTIONED CORRESPONDENCE FROM THE GOVERNOR HAWAII HAVING EXPRESSED AN INTEREST IN PARTICIPATING IN THE UNIVERSITY'S TENTH

ANNIVERSARY PROGRAMS.

12. COMMENT: THE EMBASSY WILL, IN DUE COURSE, BE SUBMITTING ADDITIONAL PROPOSALS FOR THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS.

13. IV PROGRAM. A) AHMED ALI. IT WAS POINTED OUT TO THE VICE CHANCELLOR THAT ALI'S GRANT WOULD EXPIRE IF HE WERE UNABLE TO TRAVEL ON OR BEFORE SEPTEMBER 30. THE QUESTION WAS BLUNTLY PUT TO HIM: DID HE BELIEVE THT ALI WOULD BE ABLE TO TRAVEL DURING THE PERIOD OF THE GRANT? DR. MARAJ RESPONDED YES, HE THOUGHT HE WOLD BE ABLE TO TRAVEL BEFORE SEPTEMBER 30. HOWEVER, HE HAD APPOINTED ALI TO A SIGNIFICANT NEW POSITION AND COULD NOT RISK THE POSSIBILITY OF HIM FAILING IN HIS NEW JOB. HE DID NOT WANT PEOPLE COMING TO HIM AT A LATER DATE SAYING "WE TOLD YOU ALI COUNDN'T DO IT." HE FULLY RECOGNIZED THE TTPORTUNITIES PRESETEDTO ALI BY SUCH A PROGRAM AS THE INTERN-NATIONAL VISITORS PROGRAM HE PROMISED TO GET BACK TO US DURING THE FIRST HALF OF JUNE ON DEFINITE DATES FOR ALI'S TRAVEL.

B) DR. JAMES MARAJ. HE INDICATED THAT THE TRAVEL PLANS FOR IS IV PROGRAM DEPENDDED ON SEVERAL ENGAGEMENTS, ONE IN CANADA, THE OTHR IN TRINIDAD. AS SOON AS HE HAD THESE ENGAGEMENTS SORTED OUT TO WHERE HE COULD FIT TH IV PROGRAM IN BWTWEEN, HE WOULD UNCLASSIFIED

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ADVISE US AS TO THE PRECISE DATES OF TRAVEL. HE DID INDICATE THAT IT WOULD BE SOMEWHAT LESS THAN 30 DAYS AND THAT IT WOULD TAKE PLACE TOWARD THE END OF AUGUST OR EARLY SEPTEMBER.

14. COMMENT: IT WAS CLEAR THAT DR. MARAJ FELT THAT HE HAD TO CLEAR HIS CHEST OF PREVIOUS INJUSTICES. IN SO DOING HE SHOWED HIMSELF A SMOOTH MANIPULATOR OF SITUATIONS AND A SKILLFUL DEBATER. HE ALSO EXPLAINED AT SOME LENGTH THAT HIS DESK WAS NOT FOR THE ROUTINE. THAT BY DEFINITION, IF SOMETHING HIT HIS DESK IT WAS A CRISIS. HE AND THE AMBASSADOR WOULD INTERVENE ONLY WHEN THEIR PRESENCE WAS ABSOLUTELY NEEDED.

15. WHILE DR. MARAJ IS OBVIOUSLY A THIN-SKINNED INDIVIDUAL WHOSE EGO REQUIRES CAREFUL PAMPERING, IT IS NOT TO SAY THAT A SUCCESSFUL RAPPORT CANNOT BE DEVELOPED WITH HIM AND THAT WE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO CARRY TO FRUITIN ALL OF THE PROGRAMS CURRENTLY PENDING BETWEEN THE USP AND THE U.S. GOVERNMENT. CONDON

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